

Men win regional title with comeback OT thriller

JON WALKER
Sports Editor | @ByJonWalker

ABERDEEN, S.D. — There stood Ben McCollum, on the edge of the southeast corner of Don Meyer Court in Wachs Arena. The Northwest men's basketball coach was leaning against a security rope while someone was holding an iPhone up to his face.

He had just finished coaching the Bearcats through the trials and tribulations of the Central Region Tournament.

McCollum rattled off at least a handful of names while talking to his family, who called him via FaceTime from Maryville, Missouri. He made sure to say something to most of the people on the call, but specifically his two sons and daughter.

He couldn't stay too long, though. "How about the celebration?" McCollum said to his phone in the aftermath of the final game of the Central Region Tournament. "Love you guys. We're about to go cut down the nets."

McCollum was calling his family to celebrate the Bearcats' 91-86 overtime win against top-seeded Northern State Tuesday evening, which punched Northwest's ticket to the Elite Eight for the third time in the last five seasons.



JON WALKER | NW MISSOURIAN

Northwest men's basketball coach Ben McCollum swings the net in the air after cutting it down following the Bearcats' 91-86 win over Northern State in the Central Region Tournament Championship March 16 in Aberdeen, South Dakota. The win punched Northwest's ticket to the Elite Eight for the third time in five seasons.

SEE CHAMPS | A9

Tuition, fees could increase for 2022-23 year

SIDNEY LOWRY
News Reporter | @sidney_lowry

University officials proposed an increase in tuition and fees, along with room and board, for the 2022-23 academic year. If the measure passes, students who are Missouri residents could expect to pay around \$25 more per credit hour before financial aid.

For Missouri residents, the first option in the proposed measure includes an increase of 3.9%, around \$702, for an average of 28 credit hours in 2022. Vice President of Finance and Administration Stacy Carrick mentioned that though these prices are going up, so would financial aid per student. After aid, the increase would be around \$449 per student.

For a Missouri-nonresidential student — any student who is a nontaxpayer in Missouri — it would be around \$830 more for 28 credit hours and then \$470 after aid for one year.

Carrick and Vice President of Student Affairs Matt Baker presented these new proposals for increases in bills to the Student Senate March 9.

The numbers Carrick presented were if these increases were im-



MARYANN JOHNSON | NW MISSOURIAN

Public Relations Co-Chair Alexis Van Winkle briefs the Student Senate on upcoming events around campus. For the 2022-23 academic year, there may be a \$25 increase per class for Missouri-resident students.

plemented in the 2022 fiscal year, though she strongly supports spreading the fee increase over two years to not impact student affordability and ensure welfare of the University. She will propose a two-year plan to the Northwest Board of Regents.

"If I put my blinders on as a fi-

nance person, I would say put it all on one year because there is a financial impact on the University," Carrick said. "At the same time, if there is an affordability challenge and students don't come at all, then we have to find that balance."

If the increase was spread out over

two years for Missouri-resident students, their tuition would be an estimated \$406 more for the 2022 fiscal year and then \$296 more the following year, plus any Consumer Price Index changes for the 2023 year.

SEE TUTION | A8

CITY ELECTION 2021

Dannen Merrill is running to serve his hometown

NATHAN ENGLISH
Reporter | @nathan_english

Sitting at a corner table in Board Game Cafe as the large rectangular windows displayed rows of small businesses at his back, Dannen Merrill spoke of the importance of supporting them. For Merrill, the desire to serve and his experience in finances and accounting pushed him to run for a City Council seat this April.

The second youngest of seven children, Merrill said serving his community was imbued in him from a very young age. He and his four brothers are all Eagle Scouts, and the majority of his family has spent most of their careers in pub-

lic service. For much of his life, this desire to serve has been for one community: Maryville.

The 29-year-old certified public accountant is homegrown. Merrill has spent nearly his entire life in the small town at the center of Nodaway County, receiving diplomas as both a Spoofhound and a Bearcat.

As a Spoofhound, Merrill was heavily involved in extracurriculars. The former state champion wrestler, band member and football player, among other things, was used to having his schedule filled with obligations.

SEE MERRILL | A8



ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN

City Council candidate Dannen Merrill pushes a sign into the ground outside his home to promote the upcoming election in April. Merrill was pushed to run because of his desire to serve and experience in finances and accounting.

Jasinski withdraws candidacy for Mankato president

ANDREW WEGLEY
Managing Editor | @andrewwegley

Northwest President John Jasinski, who was among five finalists to replace the outgoing president at Minnesota State University-Mankato, will likely stay put in Maryville for the next academic year. The Minnesota State Board of Trustees on Wednesday tabbed Edward Inch, a provost and vice president of academic affairs at California State University, as the next leader of MSU-Mankato.

Though Jasinski was listed along with three other finalists on Mankato's presidential search webpage, Northwest Communication Manager Mark Hornickel said in an email to The Missourian that Jasinski withdrew his candidacy from consideration in early March. Though Mankato noted on its webpage that finalist Sandra Haynes withdrew her candidacy, it made no such designation for Jasinski.

Jasinski's withdrawal and the appointment of Inch — who will replace Mankato's longtime president Richard Davenport — indicates Jasinski will remain at Northwest, where he has served as president since 2009. The decision for MSU came after a monthslong nationwide search, which dwindled 72 initial candidates down to five finalists, which included Jasinski, Inch, Haynes, Debra Larson of California State-Chico and Mrinal Mughd Varma of Auburn University.

"It is appropriate for me to explore new horizons at this time as I am quite optimistic about where Northwest is at in its life cycle," Jasinski said in a February statement.

SEE JASINSKI | A8

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County sees spike in COVID-19 cases

MADELINE MAPES
Assistant News Editor | @MadelineDMapes

Northwest President John Jasinski addressed a spike in COVID-19 cases in Nodaway County in an email to students March 11.

In the days leading up to Jasinski's mass email, Nodaway County registered 28 cases over the span of three days from March 8-10, including 15 new cases March 9. When the Nodaway County Health Department reported 10 new cases March 8, it marked the first time in more than two months the county's daily case count reached double digits.

President Jasinski said in an email to students that although local numbers are low, there is a small uptick.

"The slight increase is a reminder that we cannot let issues of COVID and well-being slip from our radars," Jasinski said in the email.

Since the spike, the number of new reported cases decreased to zero March 14-15, according to the county's COVID-19 dashboard. When Jasinski sent his mass correspondence, there were 19 active virus cases involving Northwest staff or students. Since then, the figure has dropped to 12.

Mosaic - Maryville President Nate Blackford said Mosaic Medical Center - Maryville has been monitoring the situation.

"What we have seen with that small spike is it's an isolated and known population that we continue

to monitor and work with that population," Blackford said.

He said the population is a group of manufacturing workers that are from outside of Nodaway County and have taken up a form of temporary residency while filling shifts at a local manufacturing plant.

Despite the temporary spike, fewer not as many people signed up to participate in the March 15 mass COVID-19 vaccination clinic at the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse, which was also the same day Gov. Mike Parson opened up Phase 1A, Tier 3 of the Missouri COVID-19 vaccination plan.

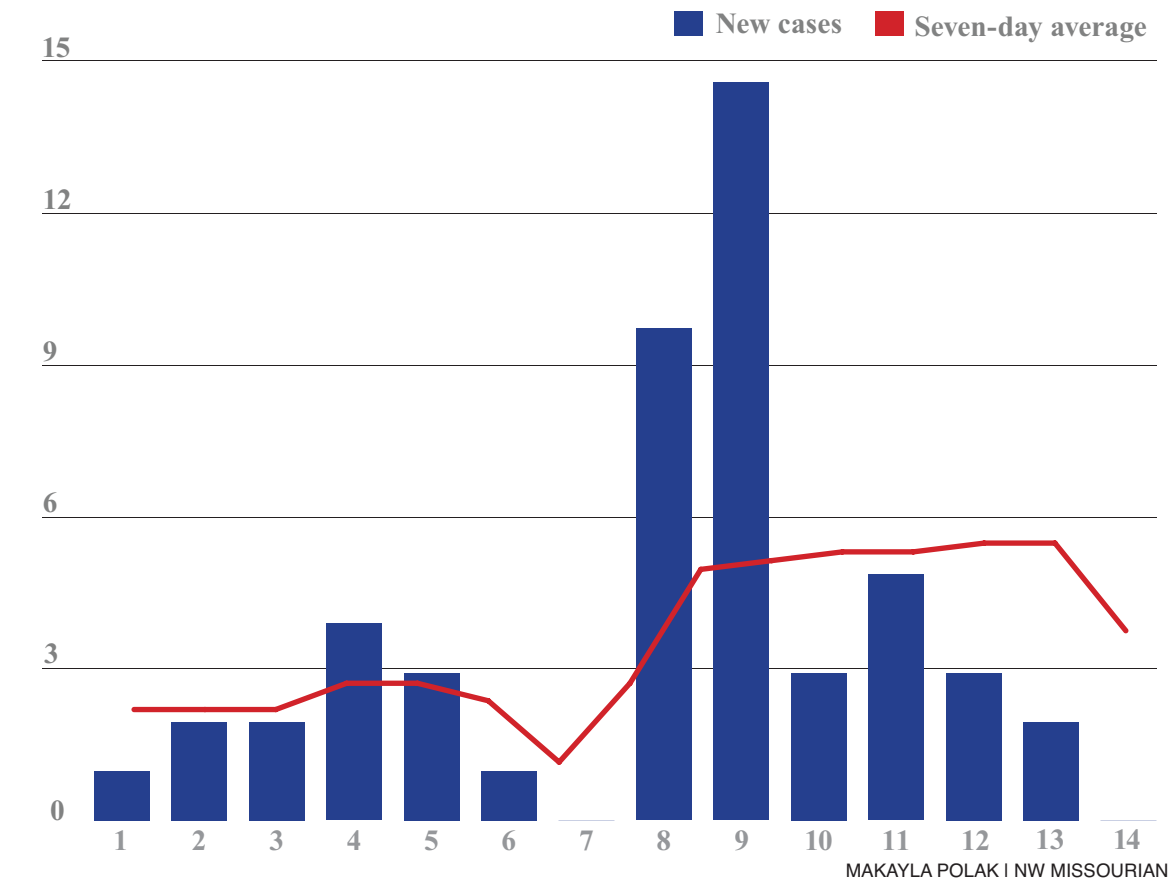
Lack of interest among eligible individuals for COVID-19 vaccine

Even with the opening of Phase 1B Tier 3 March 15, not as many local residents signed up to receive a vaccine. Blackford said along with the 700 Pfizer first doses, there were also roughly 50 Moderna second doses scheduled for the March 15 clinic.

A lack of interest among eligible individuals led Mosaic Medical Center - Maryville to use roughly 700 of the 1,000 first dose Pfizer vaccines they received from the state for the March 15 mass vaccination clinic.

Blackford said because of local demographics, the opening of Phase 1B Tier 3 did not provide enough eligible and interested individuals to

TRACKING COVID-19: NEW DAILY CASES IN COUNTY DURING MARCH



claim the other 300 Pfizer vaccines.

"The biggest impacted area for us was K-12 teachers," Blackford said. "We didn't have a lot of those other industries near here that met that requirement."

He explained that the other 300 Pfizer doses that were not used at Monday's clinic will remain frozen until they are needed for the next clinic March 24. Blackford said frozen COVID-19 vaccines shelf life is not limited. He said it is when they are unfrozen that the vaccines only last so long.

Blackford said when vaccines are pulled from the freezer and are not constituted, which means they have not been mixed with saline yet, the vaccines may last a couple of weeks before being administered.

He noted doses that are mixed with saline will last about six hours before they are no longer usable.

Blackford said Mosaic - Maryville only unfreezes and brings the amount of vaccines they need to vaccinate all of the people scheduled for a vaccine at every mass vaccination clinic.

Vaccine distribution plan

President Joe Biden announced March 11 the implementation of the next phase of the COVID-19 vaccination efforts. He called on states, tribes and territories to open up vaccine eligibility to all adults in the U.S. by May 1.

Missouri recently opened up vaccine availability to those who work in industries that keep society functioning. Although Missouri's tiered approach has allowed the state to prioritize those who need to receive the vaccine first, it has created a lag in administration of COVID-19 vaccines when administrators get to the end of people eligible and interested in their community.

"It is best to get vaccines in arms as fast as we can, and there are times when the current tiering system doesn't align with the supply and demand," Blackford said.

He said the March 15 mass clinic was a perfect example of this misalignment.

Blackford explained that had other tiers been opened, the other 300 Pfizer doses that had not been

claimed would have been administered, and more people would have been vaccinated.

Although, Blackford said there is value in the unified tiered approach. If the state had provided more flexibility on opening tiers in local areas, then that would help with administering more vaccines faster.

According to the Missouri COVID-19 dashboard, as of March 15, 19.5% of Missourians have initiated vaccination, 10.5% of which have completed vaccination with the current vaccination plan including phases and tiers.

As of March 15, there are 47 current cases in Nodaway County, 12 of which are from the University. There have been 2,628 total cases in the county and the seven-day rolling average is four.

According to the Missouri COVID-19 dashboard, 21.2% of Nodaway County's population has received at least the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. The dashboard still ranks Nodaway County as 21 out of 115 counties with the highest population of vaccinated individuals.



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Black Pony pushes back opening

KAILEE FORD
News Reporter | @kailee_ford

The up-and-coming downtown attraction Black Pony Brewing Co. has pushed its opening date to June after delays in construction. The original opening date was set for April 2021.

Co-owner Stephanie Campbell said recent bad weather and waiting on materials for construction caused the delay, pushing the original goal of April for the grand opening.

The biggest issue has been the backorder of materials because of the pandemic.

Fellow co-owner Brandon Jensen said the only issue discovered in the construction process was brick repair in the older parts of the building.

“That’s to be expected,” Jensen said “Once you uncover things you can’t really say.”

Campbell said the 120-year-old building has been a challenge on its own.

The owners had to think about possible construction methods, materials and building codes.

“It wasn’t intended for the use we are putting it through, so we

have to be thoughtful about that,” Campbell said.

Materials are starting to come in for construction, Jensen said things are getting back on schedule.

The new small business, set to feature a restaurant, bar and outdoor seating, was approved by the city council and mayor in October 2020.

The restaurant will have a full kitchen but first open without it. It will start off with small plates of food first and will have a regularly changing beer lineup, with drinks available on tap.



ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN
Nodaway County Sheriff Randy Strong points to a new phone system in the Nodaway County Jail. The phone, along with TVs and ceiling tiles, were recently replaced after being severely damaged in a fire that took place Jan. 14.

Inmates move back into county jail after fire, charges filed for trial

KENDRICK CALFEE
News Editor | @calfee_kc

Some inmates who were displaced by a fire in the Nodaway County Jail in January have been readmitted to their cells after the county worked for a little over a month to repair damage, which hindered jail operations.

At the end of February, Nodaway County Sheriff’s Department staff began transporting inmates back to Nodaway County from Andrew and Buchanan county jails. The jail officially reopened Feb. 25 and houses 10 inmates as of March 16.

sions on how to make the jail safer for the future. The first step Nodaway County Commission took was bidding out a sprinkler system to be installed.

Arson charge case rescheduled for May, Bentley pleads not guilty

Bentley appeared in court virtually for initial arraignment on one count of arson March 8. In his first appearance for charges relating to the Jan. 14 Nodaway County Jail fire, his attorney entered a not guilty plea with the court and a case management date was set for May 10.

The court set a case management conference in an effort to settle some or all issues involved in the case prior to trial. In some cases, the conference means a trial is not necessary, and in others it aims to shorten or simplify the trial.

Nodaway County Prosecuting Attorney Caleb Phillips and 4th Judicial Circuit Judge Roger Prokes appeared in person for the March 8 arraignment, while Bentley and his attorney appeared via a video conference.

After waiving formal arraignment, Bentley’s attorney, Rachel Townsend, requested 60 days for mental examinations to be complete and to meet with Bentley before the case management conference.

Phillips did not deny or counter the request from Townsend but noted a mental exam was already filed on the first case for which Bentley was originally being held in the Nodaway County Jail.

“She has filed one in case number 21-7, and the state didn’t oppose the request for a mental exam,” Phillips said. “I won’t oppose it in the other case either, 21-24. What I’m not saying is that the state won’t oppose the findings of the medical exam.”

Townsend said a case management conference was the preferred option for Bentley.

In a phone call prior to the March 8 trial, Townsend said Bentley has been on suicide watch in the different holding facilities he was staying at. Medical examinations of Bentley were requested by Townsend for his safety going forward in the legal process.



ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN
In a Sept. 21, 2020, file photo, Phi Mu members jump with their handmade signs as their new members run home to them during their sorority Bid Day in the stands of the Bearcat Stadium.

Greeks return to in-person recruitment

HAILEY MACH
News Reporter | @haileymach98

Despite COVID-19’s impact, Northwest Greek Life fraternities and sororities have found ways to grow the number of members in their chapters this spring semester.

Last semester, Greek Life organizations held a virtual recruitment due to concerns of the pandemic. This spring, the organizations have eased their way back to in-person recruitment events.

Chapters are consistently going through the process of adding members to maintain their chapter size and introduce new faces who share similar interests and values.

Greek Life coordinator Jim Gulbranson said the Interfraternity Council currently has recruited 13 new members across all fraternity chapters, and the Panhellenic Council has 18 new members across the board for sororities. Gulbranson said that the National Pan-Hellenic Council, which consists of historically Black fraternities and sororities, is not accepting new bids this semester.

Jerilynn Hoover, Alpha Sigma Alpha vice president of pub-

lic relations and recruitment, said her chapter welcomed eight new members during their spring recruitment. The first event was held Feb. 12 and concluded with their bid day March 3.

Alpha Sigma Alpha also participated in what is referred to as continuous opening bidding, where a chapter holds recruitment until they meet a desired number of members. Hoover said that when she joined the sorority, she went through this kind of bidding herself.

“[Recruitment] was very good,” Hoover said. “Our PNM’s, they really enjoyed meeting members and stuff, and they already have friends, basically close friends, in the chapter right when they joined.”

Hoover is excited for the upcoming fall recruitment and hopes to keep in-person events as it was this spring.

While some Greek Life organizations recruit new members until they reach a certain number of total members in the chapter, others recruit all semester long.

“For IFC, COVID didn’t allow for a full semester of recruitment, and it was the first spring term that chapters were allowed to re-

cruit throughout the entire semester, rather than the first couple of weeks,” Gulbranson said.

James Palmer, public relations chair and recruitment director for Phi Sigma Kappa, said his fraternity has been recruiting members the entire spring semester. He said he prefers this informal recruitment process to a set formal recruitment because of its longer duration and success.

“We had a dodgeball event at Hughes Fieldhouse, which turned into kind of like kickball. That was good,” Palmer said. “We do a lot of open houses to kind of show off the house, which a lot of guys have come to, and that’s been really fun.”

Phi Sigma Kappa has recruited two new members this semester, setting their total number of members in the chapter at 20.

Palmer said this is the first spring that Phi Sigma Kappa has been able to recruit since the fraternity was removed from campus for two years. Starting off with only members in his pledge class who had little knowledge on the recruitment process, Palmer said that the members are trying their hardest and hoping for the best this semester.

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Scholarship funds honor Appleman

MADELINE MAPES
Assistant News Editor | @MadelineDMapes

Fine, loving, gentle, capable — a grand lady is how Shirley Kohlwes described her mother, Doris Walker Appleman, whose daughters created the Doris Walker Appleman Endowed Scholarship for freshmen women majoring in business.

Appleman’s daughters, Mary Ann Andersen, Kohlwes and Jan Corrison, created the scholarship in memory of their mother and the values that she lived by as a business woman. One female student who reflects these values will receive this renewable scholarship in the fall 2021 semester as long as they meet the requirements.

Benjamin Blackford, director of the Melvin D. and Valorie G. Booth School of Business, said the \$1,000 Doris Walker Appleman Endowed Scholarship is offered to any female student pursuing a business major, but first-generation students are preferred. The scholarship requires a 3.0 grade point average and is renewable once a year.

Andersen said Appleman valued friends, family, hard work and being kind to others, even if she had to look hard to find it.

“What she tried to ... live by and that is, ‘to thy own self be true,’” Andersen said. “That was who she was.”

Andersen and Corrison said their mother grew up during the Great Depression on a farm just outside of Burlington Junction, Missouri. This upbringing led Appleman to understanding the importance of saving, and not just saving money.

Corrison said her mother saved everything she could, as it was part of her childhood to keep things that may be useful.

“Until the day she died, she kept the rubber bands from the newspaper,” Corrison said. “I mean, she never bought a rubber band because she had them from the newspaper.”

Although the Great Depression greatly influenced Appleman’s life, Andersen said her mother’s love for business first sparked when she took a commercial training class at Maryville High School, where she learned how to be a secretary.

Andersen said Appleman’s childhood home did not come with the opportunity to get a good education. She said Appleman and her siblings, when they were high school-aged, lived with a relative in Maryville in order to receive a better education.

Appleman’s daughters explained that after high school, Appleman’s father was not able to afford to send his daughter to college, which led to Appleman getting her first job as a secretary for the principal at Maryville High School.

Andersen said that education was important to people raised in the era that Appleman was.

“You didn’t take education for granted in those days,” Andersen said. “That’s one reason we wanted to do this scholarship.”

Corrison, Andersen and Kohlwes said their mother had many secretarial and business-like jobs throughout her life. They said Appleman worked at a Chicago, Illinois, law firm. She worked for the U.S. Air Force as a secretary and was later promoted to be a secretary for the North American Aerospace Defense Command during the Cold War. She also worked at the Nodaway Valley Bank in Maryville as a secretary for the president of the bank.

Andersen said throughout these

different jobs, Appleman found time to keep up with her family and social life. At one point, when she was living in Seattle, Washington, Appleman volunteered as a baby cuddler at a local hospital and by the time she finished, she had accumulated 1,000 hours of service.

“She never waived,” Andersen said.

Andersen and Corrison said that their mother’s interest in business was not limited to just her work. Andersen said Appleman would subscribe to money saving magazines, which she would also pass on to her children so that they could learn better methods for saving money.

Appleman’s daughters said they remembered their mother waiting for sales before buying clothes or material to make clothes for her family. They also said she would buy quality items and take care of them to make them last as long as she could. They said she even got into investing her money after gathering a better understanding of what investing meant for her money.

All of these experiences led to Appleman’s strong business and secretarial skills, and is what also led to Andersen, Kohlwes and Corrison to create the Doris Walker Appleman Endowed Scholarship.

Corrison said she and her sisters were able to get a college education was because they each received scholarships. They said with this scholarship, any woman studying business who meets the qualifications may receive the scholarship.

Andersen said if the woman who either does not continue to qualify for the scholarship or does not continue to study business, then a new recipient will be chosen for the \$1,000 scholarship.



SUBMITTED | NW MISSOURIAN

Doris Walker Appleman is honored through the Doris Walker Appleman Endowed Scholarship created by her daughters. This scholarship is for female business majors, preferably first-generation students, who meet the eligibility requirements.

Appleman’s daughters said that they felt that this scholarship provides an opportunity for young business women. Blackford, whose grandmother was sisters with Appleman, agreed that the scholarship opened up new opportunities for women that they may not previously have.

“It’s also a great opportunity for incoming students to have some financial support in her honor that are

entering the Booth School of Business,” Blackford said.

Blackford said discussions about him being part of the selection committee for the Doris Walker Appleman Endowed Scholarship have been held, but there has not been a final decision on who will be part of the selection committee.

“It’s always great to have an opportunity to help students,” Blackford said. “We focus on student success.”



MARYANN JOHNSON | NW MISSOURIAN

Sophomore Christina Short shows off her acting skills for the photo. Short was the first Northwest student to win the Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship competition.

Performer takes first place in acting contest

WESLEY MILLER
News Reporter | @wesleymiller360

Sophomore Christina Short was the first Northwest student to take first place in the Irene Ryan Acting competition.

While multiple Northwest students have made it to the regional finals of the competition, Short is the only one to have reached the national competition in Washington, D.C.

The Irene Ryan Acting competition is part of the Region 5 Kennedy Center American Theater Festival. At the beginning of the regional competition, there are 300 students all competing for the same thing — for a chance to be one of the 16 finalists.

This contest is not limited to Division II schools, and Short had to go against students from larger schools such as the University of Missouri-Columbia. Among these 16 finalists, the competition is then

narrowed down to one winner, who then moves onto the competition in Washington with a chance at a \$5,000 scholarship.

Short said they had an online ceremony, and she was sitting, waiting for her name to be called.

“I was like, ‘Can it go any faster? Please, please, I just want to hear my name,’” Short said.

Then after all the waiting, Short heard what she was waiting for.

“When I heard, all I needed to hear was ‘Northwest’ and I started crying, and I couldn’t stop crying,” Short said. “I heard my name and I was just, like, I couldn’t believe it. I was in shock and awe, and I was like, ‘I really did that. I did that.’ I couldn’t believe it.”

Short received her first taste of theater when she did show choir in middle school. At the time, it was just a fun activity to her, and Short said she had not put much thought into making theater into a career. Short said she was told about an audition for a summer musical by her middle school choir teacher, an opportunity that she did not pass up.

When Short went to the auditions, she got accepted, and she said she thought to herself, “Okay cool.” That was the first show she ever did in theater.

Short said she loved the experience she had, even though it was just her first time diving into theater. When she got to high school she auditioned for all the shows her school hosted.

FULL STORY ONLINE:
NWMISSOURINEWS.COM

Elementary education student awarded McCoy scholarship

HAILEY MACH
News Reporter | @haileymach98

Stepping foot into Room 200 of Brown Hall, one may notice the bright gray colored walls and artsy photos depicting Northwest’s campus hanging on them. Approaching the first dark brown wooden desk outside the office, a large black and gold frame hangs high on the wall, holding a senior picture of Morgan McCoy with angel wings edited onto her.

Workers inside the School of Education’s Office of Field Experience hung the photo above the desk in memory of where their beloved former student teaching assistant once sat — always with one foot propped up on the seat of the black swivel chair, her leg pressed up against her small body.

Morgan McCoy was, as many would describe, a bright and bubbly person whose life left a lasting impact on those at Northwest and others from around the Midwest. In the early hours of a frigid January 2018 day, the 19-year-old died after suffering severe injuries from a black pickup truck that crashed into a Maryville bar.

A year following the tragedy, Morgan McCoy’s mother, Brenda McCoy, decided to put memorial funds toward a scholarship at the University honoring her daughter.

The Morgan McCoy Memorial Scholarship grants \$750 per semester to an elementary education or early childhood education student who maintains an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher, has financial needs and is enrolled full time. A preference is made to students majoring in early childhood education and who qualify and participate in a campus work study.

In order to be considered for the Morgan McCoy Memorial Scholarship, a student must fill out the Standard Scholarship Application and fit these requirements. The scholarship is applied for an entire academic year but can be reapplied if the student is reselected through the scholarship application.

Brenda McCoy said the idea for the scholarship sprouted from knowing Morgan McCoy’s dedication to elementary education and

her love for the Bearcats. Brenda McCoy said she wanted to create a scholarship for students who hold the same passions as Morgan McCoy once had.

“I wanted someone else to, you know, be able to do what they wanted to do, like Morgan did,” Brenda McCoy said through a shaky voice. “She wanted to be a teacher; she wanted to work with the little people, and the couple of scholarships she received really helped us a lot.”

Although the scholarship wasn’t officially launched until 2021, early childhood education major Sarah Wilson was awarded the Morgan McCoy Memorial Scholarship in fall 2020. Wilson, who is student teaching kindergarten at Renner Elementary School in Kansas City, Missouri, worked as an administrative specialist in the Office of Field Experience — the same location Morgan McCoy once held a position for work study.

Cathy Barr, assistant coordinator of field experience, worked closely with Morgan McCoy in the office. Barr’s face lit up as she spoke of the fun-filled memories with Morgan McCoy. She remembers Morgan McCoy walking through the doorway to the office each day cheerfully greeting everyone with a big “hello” as her arms swung up in the air.

On Barr’s window sill, she keeps a photo framed of her with Wilson, one of Morgan McCoy and another of the former assistant coordinator, Joyce Luke. Luke was the assistant coordinator during the time Morgan McCoy worked in the office. She died of cancer Nov. 11, 2018 — the same year Morgan McCoy had died.

Barr said she keeps Morgan McCoy’s memory alive by talking about her with new employees.

Brenda McCoy said since her daughter’s passing in 2018, she has made many trips from Liberty, Missouri, to visit those working in the Office of Field Experience in Brown Hall.

Wilson recalls first meeting Brenda McCoy in the office around the time when Luke had died.

While Brenda McCoy handed out T-shirts in the office that were

dedicated to her daughter’s fundraiser, Wilson said Brenda McCoy had informed her about the memorial scholarship and encouraged her to apply.

Wilson followed through with Brenda McCoy’s advice and applied for the scholarship. She said she had to take out loans every semester and receiving this scholarship has helped her continue her education at Northwest.

Wilson remembered back to when she was declared as the scholarship recipient.

“I was very grateful and excited,” Wilson said. “Not only has it been helpful financially, but it’s a part of Morgan’s legacy. She had such an impact on so many people’s lives on and off campus, and I think it is amazing she can be honored and remembered through this scholarship.”

The scholarship money is drawn from an account holding proceeds from Morgan McCoy’s funeral, the memorial service and from fundraisers like T-shirt and wristband sales. The total of the scholarship fund made out to be around \$9,400.

Brenda McCoy said she would typically have a formal dinner to meet the scholarship recipient, but due to concerns of COVID-19, she and Wilson meet through written letters.

During Morgan McCoy’s time at Northwest, she was also an active member of the sorority Sigma Kappa where she made many friends.

Brenda McCoy remembers the handful of times she would receive Snapchats from her daughter and her friends that were taken around campus, from pictures of Morgan McCoy covered in textbooks and slumped back on a couch from spending long tiring hours studying for finals, to pictures of Morgan McCoy and her frequent combination of grilled cheese and Mountain Dew at the J. W. Jones Student Union.

“I just crack up ‘cause I’m like, ‘That is so her,’” Brenda McCoy said.

The Morgan McCoy Memorial Scholarship is only a small remnant of the imprint she leaves behind in the Northwest community.

Trans bill focuses on exclusion, not help

KAILEE FORD
Columnist
@kailee_ford

Transgender men are men. Transgender women are women. Transgender people should get to live their lives as they are, as the gender they identify as. So why are we trying to keep these kids from playing sports when there are more pressing issues trans teens deal with on a daily basis? A new bill has been introduced in the Missouri House of Representatives requiring students to play sports based on the sex listed on their birth certificate. If the bill passes, it will be on the ballot for voters to decide in 2022. The bill will affect all trans high school student athletes but has an emphasis on girls sports. The Missouri High School Activities Association’s handbook already has rules for trans athletes. Trans boys can play on boys and co-ed teams, but trans girls can’t play on girls teams. The handbook further discriminates by saying that if a trans girl has started taking hormones for transition, she cannot play on the girls team, but can play on the boys team. Missouri isn’t the only state considering discriminatory legislation against trans students. Many states including Iowa and Texas are considering similar bans. The bill does nothing but discriminate against trans girls and is damaging to their lives and futures in sports. Dr. Veenod Chulani, director of the Phoenix Children’s Hospital Adolescent Medicine Program, has debunked the reasoning behind barring trans girls from sports. Chulani said that these types of bills don’t recognize the diversity among trans females. There are many characteristics that can lead to excellence in sports, and sports utilize different skills. Simply put, there is no sound evidence that trans girls have an advantage playing women’s sports, Chulani said. The trans community is full of diverse people, and not all trans people fit into what many non-trans people think. Not all people who are transgender go through hormones or gender reassignment surgery. It’s up to them if they want to physically express their gender identity or not. And whether they want their physical appearance to match how they identify is no one’s business but theirs. Trans students need spaces where they can thrive and be supported, and playing sports can offer that space. We are only harming trans youth by excluding them. Having supportive environments for trans kids is even more crucial when you consider that transgender youth are more likely to attempt or consider suicide than their cisgender peers — individuals whose gender identities match their birth sex. We aren’t making sports fair or protecting girls sports; we are furthering inequality and discrimination of people who are transgender. All trans kids want to do is live their lives and play sports with their friends. Kids deserve to feel not only comfortable in their own skin, but in the communities they are a part of. If the bill ends up on the ballot in Missouri, we must reject it to help trans kids and athletes.



CHRIS YOUNG | NW MISSOURIAN

OUR VIEW:

Parade ‘honoring’ health care workers ignored them instead

Burny’s Sports Bar & Upper Deck once again hosted the World’s Shortest St. Patrick’s Day Parade March 13. Hosting the 34th iteration of an event designed to pack spectators together is not a great look during a pandemic. What made it even worse was that it spits in the face of those it was trying to honor. Somehow the story of a saint bringing Christianity to Ireland and getting rid of snakes paved the way for green dye in alcohol and shamrock-themed decor. Celebrations for St. Patrick’s Day are mostly harmless in normal years — save for hangovers and green-stained teeth. The 80-foot parade at a corner in downtown Mayville is no different. It’s an easy and cheap way to get positive publicity and give kids some candy. This year, dozens of local residents attended the event without even pretending to wear masks. They packed the parade route shorter than a high school basketball court and expressed the customary amount of excitement as vehicles drove through, some tossing out candy as they went. Children rushed to the sides of the route to pick up the treats that littered the pavement as parents chuckled and tried to make sure they didn’t stray too far into the road. The banner carried at the start of the parade read in green sans-serif font “Tribute to First Responders and Healthcare Workers.” “They cheer us on, but yet they don’t listen to us either,” Barb Mullock, a registered nurse and infection prevention specialist at Mosaic Medical Center - Maryville, said to a Missourian reporter last week for a story examining the impacts of COVID-19 over the last year. Mullock’s statement was not made in response to the event or even about the event at all, but it might as well have been. The short parade March 13 was a perfect example of the lack of awareness and downright dissonance people, especially in this community, have when it comes to COVID-19 and listening to health care workers. It’s disappointing but not altogether shocking. The worst possible way to honor someone is by ignoring them. Committing arson doesn’t honor firefighters, and starting a high-speed chase doesn’t honor police officers. We don’t honor people by giving them more work, by making their lives harder, by making their jobs more dangerous. Twelve months into the pandemic there’s no possible way to plead ignorance. Those who decided to show up maskless to the event knew what they were doing. They knew that they were possibly exposing themselves to a virus that has claimed the lives of half a million Americans in less than a year. They knew they were ignoring the express advice of those they were “supporting” by showing up. The coronavirus has ravaged neighborhoods and families and put an extreme strain on the rural health care system and its workers. Workers like Mullock, who wake up every day hoping that people decide to finally listen to them so they don’t have to see them in the hospital. The parade didn’t really honor health care workers, it was a slap in the face to them. It told them that being labeled “grand marshal” in a parade and having your job title receive tribute on a banner is enough compensation for continued ignorance. It’s not. The brave men and women who go to work every day, exposing themselves to COVID-19 willingly, trying to save lives and limit the spread, clearly deserve more than a banner. They deserve our admiration. They deserve our respect. Most importantly, they deserve to be listened to. If those who put on the parade or attended it truly wanted to honor health care workers, they would have worn masks, they would have been socially distanced or they wouldn’t have even had a parade at all.

YOUR VIEW:

What’s the best way to honor health care workers during a pandemic?

KAMERON WYNN
Senior
Mass Media



“We should give them a national day if we haven’t already. Honestly, without health care workers we probably wouldn’t be here. So at this point, I really wouldn’t mind if we gave them a day to celebrate them.”

ROXANA RODRIGUEZ
Junior
Biochemistry



“Giving them the proper recognition and letting people know their names and what they’ve done. A lot of times you hear about health care workers doing this and doing that, but you never know their names because they aren’t recognised.”

LIZZIE SMITH
Junior
Therapeutic Recreation



“I think they should be celebrated by honoring them and taking time to respect what they do and how much time they put into everything they do for us during the pandemic and after it’s over.”

THE STROLLER:

Your Bearcat forgives your Zoom errors

We’ve been in virtual classes for a year and some people still haven’t gotten Zoom right. It’s whatever; I know it must be difficult to understand a simple video chat program in 12 months. In one of my online lectures last week, nobody could hear my professor. We tried to speak up, but he couldn’t hear us either. We tried telling him in the chat box and emailing him, but to no avail. I genuinely felt bad as he gave an entire 50-minute silent lecture.

Most Zoom lectures usually begin with, “Can everyone hear me? OK, I see one person nodding so let’s start.” Bam, problem avoided. But audio issues are just one obstacle professors try to overcome when lecturing over video. We’ve all been there when a professor asks a question only to be met with blank faces and stares into the off-screen void. Luckily, there’s also that one student that can’t handle the awkward silence and engages.

Even when we manage to run a Zoom lecture smoothly, distractions are amplified. I’ll be trying to stay engaged in a lecture and all of a sudden it’s interrupted by a cat walking across someone’s screen or a dog going in for snuggles. How am I supposed to pay attention when there is a Lab staring at me? Then there’s the person with a new background each week. Where is Jeremy going to be this time? The Bahamas? New York

City? On the Moon? Sometimes this is the most exciting part of the lecture. Zoom isn’t perfect, and a year of using it has led to distractions popping up so frequently they’ve become familiar. Luckily, we are over the coronavirus hump and won’t have to rely on this technology anymore. It’s not like a bunch of jobs are going virtual or anything. *The Stroller has been a tradition since 1918 and does not reflect the views of The Northwest Missourian.*

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March 18, 2021

March 18, 2021



CRIME LOG
for the week of March 18

Northwest Missouri State University Police Department

March 5
There is an open investigation for harassment at Franken Hall.

March 11
There is a closed investigation for a drug law violation at Millikan Hall.

March 13
There is an open investigation for harassment at Franken Hall.

March 14
There is a closed investigation for a liquor law violation at Tower Suites West.

March 15
There is an open investigation for stealing at Hudson Hall.

March 16
There is an open investigation for stealing at B.D. Owens Library.

Maryville Department of Public Safety

Feb. 27
There was a structure fire on the 31000 block of Sunset Lane.

Feb. 28
There is an ongoing investigation for lost or stolen property on the 100 block of North Vine Street.

March 3
There was a grass fire on the 24000 block of 315th Street.

March 8
There was a recovered license plate on the 100 block of West Ninth Street.

March 9
There is an ongoing investigation for lost or stolen property on the 1600 block of South Main Street.
The Maryville Fire Department assisted in a vehicle accident on State Highway V and Hawk Road.

March 10
There was a grass fire on the 27000 block of Katydid Road.
There was a grass fire on State Highway F and 280th Street.

March 14
There is an ongoing investigation for property damage on the 600 block of North Mulberry Street.
There is an ongoing investigation for stealing on the 300 block of East Summit Drive.

SIDNEY
CONTINUED FROM A1

The proposed increase also means Missouri-nonresidential students would pay \$533 more for 2022 and then \$296 the following year, plus any CPI changes for 2023. For this increase, there was no definitive number provided on how much the CPI would raise tuition. Carrick said that the CPI has been anywhere from less than 1% all the way to a 9% increase after factoring in fees.

After hearing Carrick’s presentation, Student Senate members said they were concerned about the possible number of students who only stay for one year if they do the two-year plan.

Carrick said it was nothing to be worried about and that the University would dip into its savings to cover money lost from students who only attend for one year.

“We are performing within reason and certainly to our budgets,” Carrick said. “We, over the last 10 years, have worked really hard to build the appropriate level of reserves to where we don’t have to panic.”

Overall, the potential impact on tuition and fees would be around a 3.9% increase if they only do the single-year plan. If the University decides to make this increase over two years, then it would be a smaller increase. Room and board would also have a 3% increase, but it will all be in the 2022-2023 academic year instead of being spread out over two years.

There was also a proposal of having a single-blended rate between all courses for tuition. Last week, some members of Student Senate asked about the online course fee. The single-based rate was presented as a solution to the difference in these fees.

The online course fee originated when online students were the only ones who used Canvas, but now that all students use it, the University has proposed a single fee of around \$702 for all students in replacement of the online course fee.

“Whether you’re taking an on-ground course, an online course, a course in Kansas City or a blended course, it’s all the same tuition rate,” Carrick said. “It makes sense for the blended rate so you’re all paying for that service.”

Some senators brought up the fact that they’re wanting to raise these prices during a pandemic and thought it would be a better idea to do it over two years to help affordability for students.

READ MORE
ONLINE

A full version of this story detailing how Student Senate proposes to lower the co-curricular fee can be found online at NWMISSOURINEWS.COM



ANDREW WEGLEY | NW MISSOURIAN
Northwest President John Jasinski observes the University’s Board of Regents Jan. 28. Jasinski was one of four finalists in the running to replace the outgoing president at Minnesota State-Mankato before withdrawing his candidacy in early March.

JASINSKI
CONTINUED FROM A1

“We continue to ‘bring it’ and disrupt from a position of strength. ... Our core competencies of being safe, trusted, invested and resourceful are hallmarks, and our brand is as strong as ever,” Jasinski said.

It’s unclear why Jasinski withdrew his candidacy. He participated in a virtual candidate forum for an audience of Mankato students, staff and stakeholders in early February, where he indicated the time was right for him to depart Northwest as the University concludes a 7-year fundraising campaign. In an email, Hornickel said there was “no reason” for Jasinski’s withdrawal.

MSU’s human resources committee, chaired by trustee Michael Vekich, voted unanimously to ap-

point Inch after the California State vice president was recommended by Devinder Malhotra, the system’s chancellor who helped lead the search process. In an entirely-virtual committee meeting, Malhotra said his recommendation came after several months of research, rounds of interviews, and a background check on each finalist.

Before the board voted on Inch’s appointment, MSU trustee Cheryl Tefer, who helped conduct interviews in the search process, said the final decision was made between two standout candidates, but she did not identify which finalist beside Inch was in the final running. Echoing Tefer’s comments, trustee Dawn Erlandson noted Inch’s involvement with CSU’s 23-campus system.

“We had a great slate of finalists; they were all very impressive,”

Erlandson said. “We were fortunate to have them seeking this position. I’m excited to see what we can learn from the Cal State system. They’re doing a lot of things right in California.”

In February, Jasinski’s potential departure was near front-of-mind for Northwest’s Board of Regents Chair John Moore, who said the Board likely would have named an in-house interim replacement if Jasinski was tabbed to lead Mankato.

Northwest’s board then was short two members, which Moore said could be a “complicating factor” in identifying the University’s next president. In the month since, Gov. Mike Parson named two appointees to the board and Jasinski’s departure is no longer imminent — a series of developments that will largely return the University’s administrative operations to normal.

MERRILL
CONTINUED FROM A1

He would arrive early in the morning for band and would stay until the sun went down to attend practice for whatever sport was in season.

One of the more foundational experiences of his high school career was Missouri Boys State. The program gathers hundreds of high school juniors from schools all over Missouri and places them on the campus of the University of Central Missouri for a week during the summer.

The boys, essentially, run their own state and local governments and learn about Missouri’s system of government through hands-on experience. He has volunteered for a decade for Missouri Boys State; he is currently the treasurer for the program.

“That was another chance to instill in me the obligation to serve others and your community,” Merrill said of his time as an attendee at Missouri Boys State in 2009.

His tenure at Northwest could be characterized in much the same way as his high school career: full of obligations. During his time at Northwest, Merrill was a member of Phi Sigma Kappa, a board member for St. Jude’s Up ‘til Dawn and a member of Northwest’s Student Senate.

While in college, Merrill got firsthand experience with the City Council and local government with his position as city liaison for Student Senate, attending council meetings and reporting back to students on campus about what was going on.

“He showed up and he played the part, and I think that’s how I knew that he was really taking it seriously and had an interest in it,” said Renee Riedel, former mayor, and member of the City Council during Merrill’s time as city liaison.

Riedel joked that Merrill was always the best dressed at meetings and would be in full business attire when she and her fellow council members would often wear jeans. Merrill’s passion for local government and serving in that way was clear even while he was in college, Riedel said.

Debielle Patee-Merrill, Merrill’s younger sister who now serves as Student Senate’s vice president and a student ambassador, saw her older brother’s involvement in so many things at Northwest as a “guiding light for her.” Patee-Merrill spent much of her high school career intent on having the “DI experience”

at a large college, but Merrill gave her some words of wisdom that pushed her to become a Bearcat.

“At those massive schools, you will be a minnow trying to survive in the ocean. But at Northwest, you can be a shark in Colden Pond.” Patee-Merrill said, recalling her brother’s advice.

“I remember thinking (at the time) that was the stupidest thing he’s ever said,” Patee-Merrill said. “And now I say that on just about every tour I give.”

After Merrill’s time as a “shark in Colden Pond,” he moved away to work at the large accounting firm BKD, LLP in Kansas City, Missouri, where he became certified as a CPA.

He served as part-owner and operator of the local bar The Outback during his stint at BKD. Coming back around Christmastime in 2017, Merrill went to the local accounting firm formerly known as Marsh, Espey & Riggs PC - CPAs to ask a question about payroll for the bar. Through the course of the conversation, then-partner Jerry Riggs told Merrill of his desire to retire and was looking for a young CPA to take over for him. Merrill started a few months later at the firm and officially bought Riggs out in 2019, making the firm Marsh, Espey & Merrill PC - CPAs.

“That was really special for all of us,” Patee-Merrill said. “We were really excited.”

Shortly after returning to his hometown, Merrill wanted to jump headfirst into local politics. He applied for a vacant council seat in 2018 that ultimately went to Councilman Tye Parsons.

For Merrill, the decision to run for one of the two open seats in the upcoming election is not borne out of the pandemic.

“Had coronavirus never happened, as is demonstrated with my prior interest, I would still be interested in being on City Council,” Merrill said.

Merrill was encouraged by outgoing councilmen Jason McDowell and Matt Johnson to run for one of the vacant positions, he said. He ultimately made his decision in the fall to throw his hat in the ring.

There’s no axe to grind with the current council, Merrill said; he thinks overall the group is doing a good job. He believes he could help, especially with finances and budgeting.

Merrill sees a need on the council for someone with financial expertise. As a small business owner himself and an accountant for oth-

er small businesses in Maryville, he said he can fill that need. He also sees an opportunity to do more.

Merrill said the current council is small business-friendly but that it could make those businesses a larger priority. Many businesses are hurting as a result of COVID-19, and Merrill said there is a way for local government to be doing more to help them.

“What I’ve seen as of late and what I want to continue to push is that the city is budgeting funds for tourism, for downtown revitalization,” Merrill said as he gestured to the Board Game Cafe and the brick buildings surrounding him.

The CPA council candidate is not interested in the “sexy” side of local politics. He’s more interested in what he said many consider mundane, looking over budgets and making financial decisions with a trained eye.

“Up until this year with the mask mandate and all that stuff, you could probably have asked 60% of the citizens, ‘Who was on the City Council?’ and they probably could have named half of them,” Merrill said.

Water quality issues and mask mandates vaulted the City Council to new heights of prominence during the pandemic rarely seen before in the area. Merrill said the city is taking the right steps toward fixing the water issue, but that budget concerns will pop up soon over the cost of that endeavor. He believes he can aid in those budget endeavors if elected to the City Council.

As far as the mask mandate, Merrill, if elected, would not vote to extend the mandate past its April 6 expiration date. Merrill supported the mandate at certain points but said he doesn’t believe it will be necessary by the time new council members are elected.

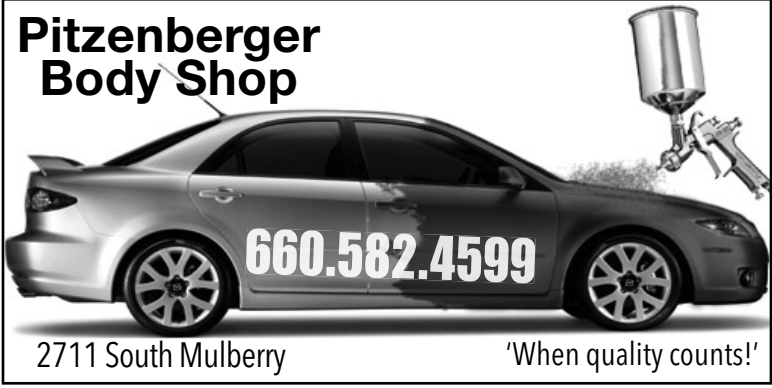
“I think we are on the downhill side of this,” Merrill said. “I think enough people are getting vaccinated that we are really past it.”

The elections come at the busiest time of the year for an accountant: tax season. Merrill chuckled as he said he was used to being “overextended,” but he’s not worried. He’s spent much of his life balancing obligations and timelines, and if elected to City Council, the added commitment will not be anything new.

The sky was getting darker as Merrill gathered his things to exit the quiet cafe nestled on Fourth and Main. He was going back to the office to do some “homework,” he said.

“There are 24 hours in the day, might as well use them,” Merrill said.

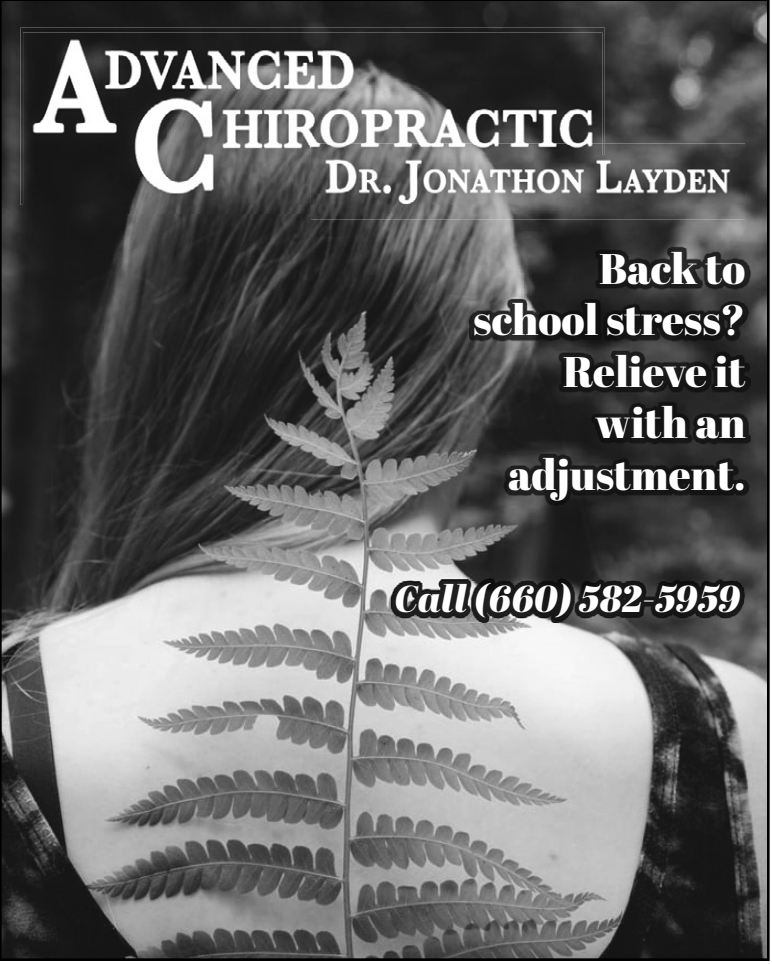
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SUCCESS

CONTINUED FROM A12

The Ichabods also yield some pretty accurate hitters, including 2019 MIAA Co-Player of the Year senior Genna Berg. In the last contest between the two, Berg led the Ichabods with 15 kills to go with nine digs and five assists.

Although Northwest pulled out a 3-1 victory against Washburn, the matchup began with the Bearcats down 23-19 in the first set, which provided seven ties and three lead changes. The 'Cats would rally for

a 26-24 victory, proving this team can face adversity.

"I just said, 'We're not giving up, and we're just following our gameplan and living in the moment,'" Woerth said. "If we look outside that moment, we have a tendency to get overwhelmed just like anybody else would. You just play it point by point; you live in the moment and get them out of system and do your job."

Compared to last season's team, Woerth has noticed her squad is better at coming back when put in a scenario where it cannot afford mis-

takes. The staff continues to train the players to have a similar mindset each season, but Woerth sees a different mindset due to the individuals that collectively make the team in 2021.

A standout performer in the Feb. 24 match was sophomore setter Alyssa Rezac, who notched 38 assists, along with six digs, two blocks and two kills. She also had a service ace, which sealed the first set comeback.

"One of the really big positives about Alyssa is just her demeanor. She's not a leader that gets super

high or super low, she's a leader that's always across the board very very consistent," Woerth said. "You see what you get from her — everyday you're not seeing anything different, because of that, she builds a lot of trust with her teammates."

Washburn, who completed the season sweep of the Bearcats during the 2019 season, now has to avoid being swept themselves. All-MIAA first team selection setter Allison Sadler didn't make the trip to Maryville, but could find herself back on the court this time around.

"You can hit to her as much as

you can in the back row. You can serve aggressively and get them out of system so it makes her job a lot harder on the second contact," Woerth said on changing their game plan to adapt to Sadler. "Since she's not the first contact of anything really, the only way you can make her the first contact is if you hit to her on offense. We plan to keep her busy in those areas for sure, so that she has a really big load to take and she can not affect the game as much."

Northwest will look to sweep the Ichabods for the first time since 2018 in Topeka, Kansas.

Blowout win over Washburn sends 'Cats to title game

JON WALKER
Sports Editor | @ByJonWalker

ABERDEEN, S.D. — The first three meetings between Northwest men's basketball and Washburn epitomized everything college basketball in March should be.

The Ichabods needed overtime to beat the Bearcats 84-82 Jan. 7 in Bearcat Arena. It marked the Bearcats' first loss in more than a year.

Northwest needed overtime to beat Washburn 88-85 Feb. 20 in Topeka, Kansas. That win clinched the Bearcats' eighth straight MIAA regular season title.

Washburn needed a 55-foot



buzzer-beater to beat the Bearcats 69-68 March 6 in the MIAA Tournament Championship game. The Ichabods halted Northwest from winning its sixth consecutive MIAA Tournament title.

When the second-seeded Bearcats and third-seeded Ichabods met in the semifinals of the Central Region Tournament March 14 in Wachs Arena, Northwest didn't need much more than the first 10 minutes of the game to show the fourth and final meeting between the two programs was going to be nothing similar to the first three.

Northwest ended Washburn's season with an 85-44 beatdown of the Ichabods.

"Our scouting report was to a T," said Northwest junior guard Trevor Hudgins, who recorded 14 points and eight assists in the win. "We executed perfectly. We just gave a lot of effort, and the results show."

Northwest's 41-point victory is the largest NCAA Division II Tournament margin in the history of the program, which was previously 29 (March 16, 2019 — Minnesota State). The game also marked the fewest amount of points the Bearcats (24-2) have ever allowed in an NCAA Division II Tournament game.

The Bearcats led by as many as 54 with less than seven minutes remaining in the second half (80-26).

Despite the eventual blowout, the first few minutes of the game mirrored the entirety of the first three installments of the season series. Northwest sophomore forward Luke Waters nailed a jumper to tie the game at 4 with 16 minutes and 8 seconds left in the first half.

Northwest rode the momentum provided from Waters' shot and went on a 24-0 run en route to a 26-4 lead.

FULL STORY ONLINE:
NWMISSOURINEWS.COM



MARYANN JOHNSON | NW MISSOURIAN

Northwest baseball freshman pitcher Zach Wiese pitches to a batter from Rogers State March 13 in Maryville. The Bearcats took the win 2-1 against Rogers State, moving their record to 6-6.

SWEEP

CONTINUED FROM A12

Hanson said his fastball was working well that game. He was able to hit his spots, and when Rogers State put the ball in play, the Bearcats' defense was there to make the play.

In the four games Hanson has pitched, he is 2-0 with a 1.82 ERA. He has only given up eight hits and has limited opposing batters to a batting average of .107.

"Instead of trying to strike out everyone, I am just pitching to contract more, and I think that is making a big difference in my pitching," Hanson said. "I have been trying more to compete and get guys out any way impossible instead of strikeouts."

At the plate, the Bearcats combined for 10 hits, including two runs in the first inning. Sophomore outfielder Ryan Koski and sophomore designated hitter Tyler Peters each had an RBI in the first inning.

Junior second baseman Peter Carlson showed all kinds of things he could do at the plate, delivering a crucial squeeze bunt in the sixth and a two-run double in the eighth.

"I got the bunt sign from Coach, and the only thing I was thinking was to get it down and to get it away from the pitcher," Carlson said. "On my double, their infield was in and I was looking to elevate a pitch. I hadn't seen a lot of fastballs that game and he threw a changeup I was sitting on, and I hit it well."

The final game of the weekend series belonged to Northwest, as the

Bearcats finished the sweep of Rogers State with a score of 2-1.

Freshman pitcher Zach Wiese earned his first win of the season, going eight innings while giving up one run and three hits. Alex Slocum, who pitched in all three games, worked the ninth inning with little-to-no trouble for his third save of the season.

Carlson brought a run home on one hit and Mackie had two hits with an RBI. In total, the Bearcats had eight hits and were able to come away with their third consecutive win.

The Bearcats pitchers stood out during the three games, limiting the Hillcats to a .160 batting average.

"When you get great pitching you can go a long way," Loe said. "Alex did a great job coming in all three games and giving it his best. He never wore down. All of those guys who pitched had a great series."

Northwest moved to 6-6 on the season and 5-4 in MIAA play, while Rogers State dropped to 7-6 and 4-5 in the MIAA.

"We needed that big-time; it was a big confidence booster," Hanson said. "Hopefully, we can keep rolling and get some games from Pittsburg State, and we can keep going on this hot streak."

"Guys were excited and were happy with how the games went," Loe said. "We are far from playing our best, but getting a sweep in this conference without playing the best is a great weekend."

Northwest will host its third three-game series in as many weeks starting March 20, when Pittsburg State travels to Maryville.



JON WALKER | NW MISSOURIAN

Junior guard Diego Bernard makes a layup during the first half of the Bearcats' 91-86 win over Northern State in the Central Region title game March 16 in Aberdeen, South Dakota. Bernard finished with 9 points and eight rebounds.

CHAMPS

CONTINUED FROM A1

"You probably won't see a better college basketball game this year," McCollum said in his postgame press conference via Zoom, which has been used throughout the post-season to help prevent players from contracting COVID-19. "We're able to come away with a big win. It was fun."

With a little more than three minutes left in the game, it seemed likely McCollum was going to have to call his family and tell them he'd be home until next season.

Northern's junior forward Parker Fox had just drained two free throws to put the Wolves (19-2) ahead 76-65 with 3:04 left in the second half.

With Northwest (25-2) struggling to score and stop Fox, who finished with a game-high 34 points and 12 rebounds before fouling out in overtime, it was the beginning of the end — or so it seemed.

"There's some of that thought of losing that crept in there," McCollum said. "If you're asking me what's the chances, very low chances at that point. But, with our group, they've proven there's always a chance."

Despite the chances being lower than they've been all season for the Bearcats, it wasn't over. They took advantage of whatever chance they had left, too, outscoring the Wolves 14-3 in the final 2 minutes and 45 seconds of regulation to force overtime, in large part due to late-game heroics from junior guard Trevor Hudgins.

Guard Mason Stark was at the free-throw line with 12 seconds remaining in the second half with the hopes of giving the Wolves a 4-point lead, which would've more than likely ended the Bearcats' season.

Stark made the first, which gave Northern a 79-76 lead.

Stark missed the second, which gave the Bearcats a chance to tie the game.

Northwest junior guard Diego Bernard grabbed the rebound and dished the ball to Hudgins, who drove to the left wing of the south

basket in Wachs Arena.

Hudgins was met by Northern's Andrew Kallman, who cut him off from the original path he was taking. The MIAA Player of the Year used a behind-the-back, step-back move to throw up a last-second prayer to keep the Bearcats' season alive.

Hudgins' prayer was answered, tying the game at 79 with 4.7 seconds left.

"The biggest thing with him is his cool head," McCollum said about Hudgins, who finished with a team-high 29 points. "He has zero arrogance to him whatsoever. It is a genuine, extreme confidence. There are few people in this world that have the confidence he has ... I mean, I wish I could say that was coaching, but that was just him making a play."

Before that moment, before Hudgins was the savior, it didn't appear it'd be the night in which he'd be the hero. He tallied a mere 2 points in the first half before scoring 27 in the second to record his 50th career 20-point performance.

He wasn't alone in getting off to a slow start, as Northwest collectively struggled in almost every facet of the game of basketball for the matchup's first few minutes.

A little more than seven minutes into the contest, Northern led 18-6. The Bearcats struggled to do anything, including making a basket or stopping the Wolves from doing it nearly every possession.

"They really hit us in the mouth to start," McCollum said, reflecting on the win that didn't seem likely at multiple points in the game. "They put it on us pretty good."

The Bearcats eventually clicked and outscored Northern 29-18 to trail by 1 point at the break (36-35). They mostly did it without Bernard, who sat much of the first half after picking up two fouls in the first three minutes.

Guard Byron Alexander was Bernard's replacement, but it wasn't an unfamiliar spot for the freshman, who has served as the sixth man for Northwest all season. Alexander was the Bearcats' catalyst on offense and eventually finished with a career-high 21 points to go along with five re-

bounds and three steals.

Alexander was named the Most Outstanding Player of the Central Region Tournament after not missing a single shot from the field in the Bearcats' two games in Aberdeen, South Dakota.

"That's tough for a true freshman to come in against a team like that," McCollum said. "It says a lot about our older guys. They believe in them. They talk to them. They led the way; it was a player-led victory."

One of the older guys, senior forward Ryan Hawkins, made his second basket of the game midway through the first half, a layup that made him the second Northwest player to reach the 2,000-point mark.

Hawkins trails only former teammate Justin Pitts for first on the program's all-time scoring list (2,459). That seemed insignificant in the aftermath of the win, though. He didn't want to credit himself for his most recent accolade.

Instead, he credited the fact that Northwest is good enough to play deep into the postseason every year, which gives him more opportunities to score than most others get.

"Maybe I've been here too long, too," Hawkins said through a laugh. "Who knows?"

"He'll go down as one of, if not the best players in Northwest history," said McCollum, who coached Pitts. "He's a pretty special player."

The senior will get more chances to add to his scoring total when the Bearcats play in the Elite Eight starting March 24 in Evansville, Indiana.

Throughout everything the Bearcats had gone through for perhaps their hardest 45 minutes of basketball this season prior to their second net-cutting ceremony of the year, before McCollum was able to have a virtual embrace with his family, Hawkins knew he wasn't ready to go back to Maryville and stay there.

"You're always going to have obstacles," Hawkins said. "Don't let that obstacle be your final destination. Find a way to get over it and keep going, and tonight we found a way to keep playing. I wasn't ready to be done."

NATIONALS

CONTINUED FROM A12

Earning All-American honors wasn't all that special to him, he said, and he was more focused on enjoying himself and having fun with the sport.

"However, knowing that all the hard work is paying off is encouraging and exciting and keeps me motivated to continue to improve," Morgan said.

The Northwest's men's distance medley team earned fourth in the event with a time of 9 minutes, 47 seconds and 36 milliseconds. Those on the relay team were juniors Jake Norris and Abdelrahim Mahgoub, senior Caelon Harkey and sophomore Reece Smith. They, too, were named first-team All-Americans.

In the women's high jump, sophomore Jada Shanklin reached sixth place with a jump of 5-7 1/4. That performance earned Shanklin first-team All-American honors, too.

Junior Omar Austin finished fifth in the men's 400-meter dash with a time of 47.77. Austin also placed eighth in the men's 200-meter dash. He was named to the All-America first team in both events.

Sophomore Gavyn Monday and Harkey joined Austin in the 400, where they earned second-team All-American honors after running 48.83 and 48.65, respectively.

"I think I had a solid performance," Harkey said. "I did not put up the best times of my season, but I gave a good effort."

The men finished 12th at the meet, giving the MIAA five teams in the top 12, including, besides Northwest,

Missouri Southern, Lincoln, Central Missouri and Pittsburg State.

Northwest had two athletes there for the women's team, both competing in the women's 800-meter run: sophomore Delanie Dykes and freshman Bailey Blake.

Dykes earned first-team All-American honors with a time of 2:13.74, and Blake received second-team All-American honors with a time of 2.12.22. The women, as a team, finished in 36th place.

Williams and Federico Crisci participated in the men's 4x400-meter relay and placed seventh with a time of 3:15.65. All four of them were named to the All-America first team for the 4x400 finish.

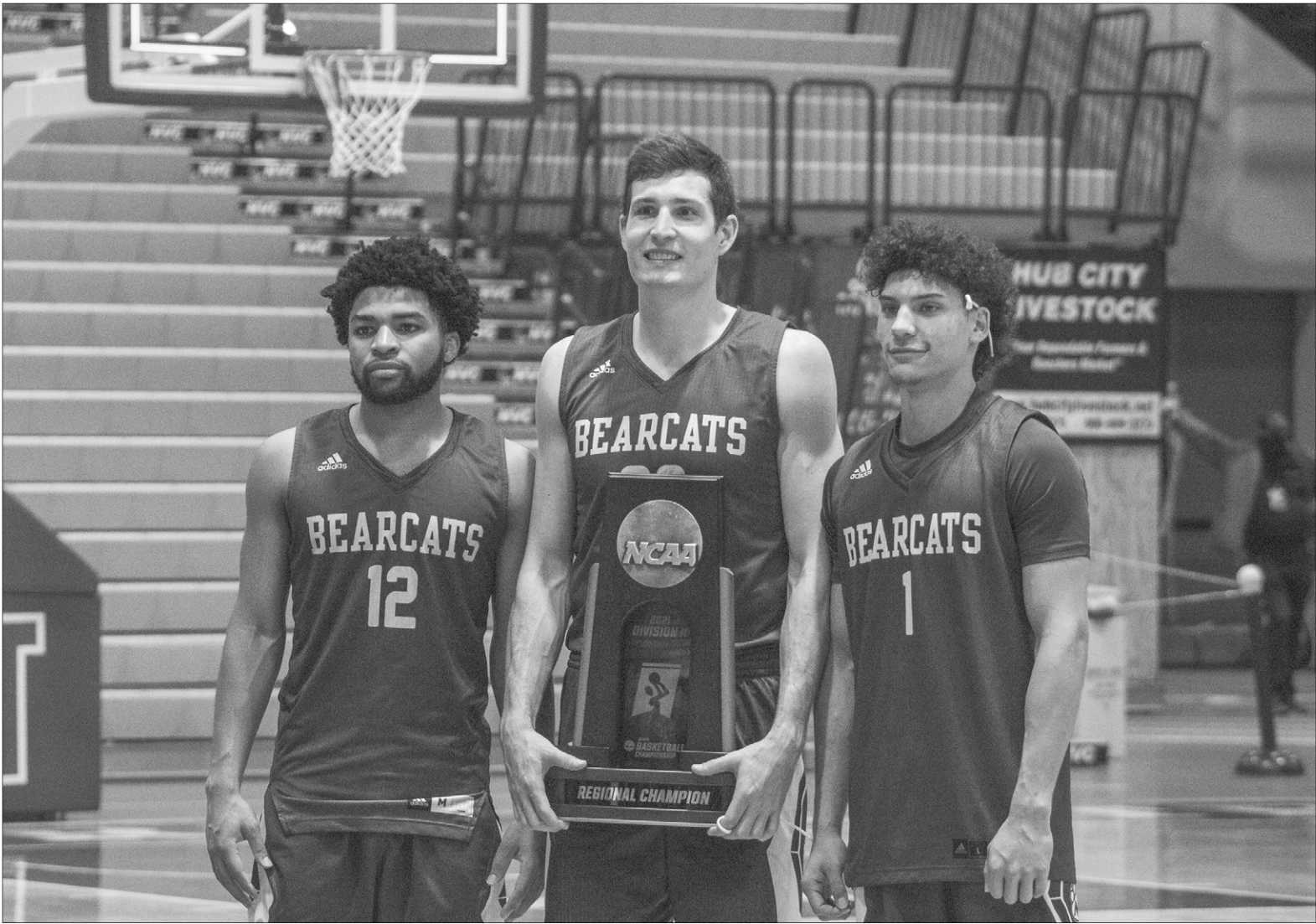
Despite the nearly 800-mile trip, the Northwest track athletes were not bothered by the distance.

"The trip was pretty spaced out, and we had enough time to shake out our legs and get feeling fresh before competing," Dykes said.

"My teammates and I knew exactly what we were supposed to do on the trip down to Alabama," Harkey said.

Now, with the indoor track season over, the Northwest track team is looking ahead to the outdoor season, with the first meet being the Emporia State University Relays March 26-27 in Emporia, Kansas.

"That's one of the best parts of track: we have two seasons every year," Morgan said. "I know where I'm at and I can continue to grow. It's a fresh start and another chance to work and get better."



JON WALKER | NW MISSOURIAN
Junior guard Trevor Hudgins (12), senior foward Ryan Hawkins (33) and junior guard Diego Bernard (1) pose for a photo with the Division II Central Region Tournament trophy March 16 after beating Northern State 91-86 in overtime. The win sends Northwest men’s basketball to the Elite Eight.

WALK THE TALK:

Assessing No. 2 seed ranking for Bearcats

JON WALKER
Sports Editor
@ByJonWalker



Welcome to this week’s edition of Walk The Talk, partly written from my luxurious hotel room in the Quality Inn of Aberdeen, South Dakota. If you weren’t following along on social media all of this last week, then you probably didn’t know I was in South Dakota to bring you the best coverage west of the Mississippi when it comes to Northwest men’s basketball.

With that being said, this week’s mailbag column will once again be about the Bearcats, who claimed the program’s third Central Region title in five seasons

Byron Alexander as the MVP of the tournament and not Hudgins or Hawkins?

Without freshman guard Byron Alexander, the Bearcats wouldn’t have returned to Maryville with something to look forward to next week, along with another trophy for McCollum to sit in front of the desk in his office.

Instead, they would’ve returned to Maryville to prep for next season.

Junior guard Diego Bernard, the MIAA Defensive Player of the Year and the Bearcats’ catalyst of defense, picked up two fouls within the first seven minutes of the title game March 16 against Northern State. Alexander came in to replace him.

At that point, Northern led the Bearcats 16-4. No team this season, and probably in the last handful of years, has jumped out on Northwest as well as the Wolves did that game. The Bearcats couldn’t score. They couldn’t stop Northern from scoring.

Everything that could’ve gone wrong to start went wrong.

Eleven seconds after checking into the game, Alexander got his first bucket, a look right at the rim after making a beautiful cut through Northern’s defense.

Alexander eventually finished with a career-high 21 points to go along with five rebounds and three steals.

In the Bearcats’ two games during the Central Region Tournament, he was 10-of-10 from the field and grabbed 10 rebounds.

I understand that Trevor Hudgins

is Trevor Hudgins, and his heroics saved the Bearcats’ season, but Alexander had Northern fans yelling at the officials, begging for them to call fouls on the true freshman so that he would foul out. They didn’t, and he helped end the Wolves’ season.

Is there anything else standing in the way of the Bearcats’ third national title?

Literally speaking, yes. Three more games stand in front of them.

However, I think the final game of the Central Region Tournament was about as good of a national title game as you could ask for. Whichever team won that game was going to go on to win a national title. It happened to be the Bearcats.

Northern was the team best suited to beat the Bearcats. The Wolves have one of the best players in Division II that doesn’t play for Northwest in forward Parker Fox, who dropped 34 points and 12 rebounds on the Bearcats. It was the most points they’ve given up to a single player all season.

They had guard Mason Stark, too, who is the only player in the NCAA that has a better 3-point percentage than Trevor Hudgins (min. 80 attempts). However, Northwest limited him to 1-of-11 from the field and only one make on six attempts from beyond the arc.

If Northern couldn’t beat the Bearcats, I don’t know another team that can.

How did they not end up as the top seed in the Elite Eight?

This is probably the first time I wish I had an answer to a question, because I really don’t know how West Texas A&M ended up as the No. 1 seed.

For those that don’t know, the teams that make it to the Elite Eight are reseeded when they get there for matchup purposes. After the Bearcats’ win over Northern State, I figured they were one of only two options for the Elite Eight’s top seed.

Northwest, a team that finished fourth, beat the team that finished second (Northern) and is the No. 2 seed in the Elite Eight.

West Texas A&M, which finished fifth, beat the team that finished 10th in the South Central Region Tournament and is the No. 1 seed.

Something doesn’t add up.

The last time Northwest didn’t get the No. 1 seed (the Central Region Tournament), the Bearcats beat the team that did.

For that to happen again, they’d have to beat West Texas A&M in the National Championship.

Need two wins to get to that point, though.

Walk The Talk is a mailbag that focuses on all things Northwest Athletics. To submit a question for the next edition of the mailbag, tweet @ByJonWalker or email j.walker@missourian@gmail.com.

Rocket League squad boosts past Simpson

NICK LUEBRECHT
Missourian Reporter | @NWMSports

The Northwest Rocket League esports team jumped off to a hot start in the first three weeks of its season and looked to continue their hot streak moving forward.

The team faced off against the Simpson College Rocket League esports team Tuesday, March 9, looking for the fourth win of the season and to continue its undefeated start.

In Game 1, the Bearcats were able to put eight shots on target while burying five of them. Ben Shewey was the Player of the Game in Game 1 with a score of 480, two goals and two assists. Peyton Pettiecord almost had an identical stat line with 446 points, two goals and two assists. Noah Hufford had 358 points, one goal and one save.

The Bearcats won Game 2 with a score of 2-0, putting Northwest up 2-0 over Simpson. Pettiecord was at the top of the leaderboard, earning himself the Player of the Game of that round.

Pettiecord had 386 points and two goals. Hufford and Shewey combined for 278 points, one save and one shot on target.

In Game 3, Northwest continued



its dominance, scoring four goals on six shots. Shewey once again earned himself Player of the Game, putting up 434 points, two goals and one assist. Pettiecord barely missed 300 points, but he put up a respectable 294 points, one goal while recording one assist. Hufford had a similar stat line as Pettiecord did, coming in with one goal and one assist and 282 points.

“I believe we are all feeling good.”

-PEYTON PETTIECORD

The Bearcats continued their already impressive start of the season in their matchup with Simpson College. Northwest ended up winning and improving to 4-0 on the season. The more impressive highlight from last Tuesday’s contest, though, was that the Bearcats only allowed one goal during the

whole match.

“Our communication got a little bit better,” Pettiecord said.

In preparation for last week’s game, the team wanted to work on the communication between the players as well as working on their callouts.

“I believe we are all feeling good for what we have been able to accomplish,” Pettiecord said.

Pettiecord also said that he is not entirely sure if the team was expecting to get off to this hot of a start, but he is not complaining.

Looking ahead, the team’s next matchup is against the Bowling Green State University Rocket League esports team.

“We most likely will be working the same things as last week,” Pettiecord said.

Pettiecord said that in preparation for Tuesday’s matchup, shot placement and communication are the two main things the team always works to improve on. He thinks that those two concepts seem to be the biggest things that bring the team trouble.

The Rocket League esports team took on the Bowling Green State University Rocket League esports team March 16th at 7 p.m.

Northwest Tennis finds success in Springfield

NORTHWEST ATHLETICS
Press Release | @bearcatsports

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. — For the second straight night Northwest’s men’s tennis team knocked off a ranked foe at the Cooper Indoor Tennis Courts March 13.

Northwest picked up a 4-2 win over No. 20-ranked Midwestern State. The Bearcats scored a 6-0 win over No. 25-ranked Southwest Baptist late Friday night.

Northwest won the No. 2 and No. 3 doubles matches to take the doubles point against MSU.

The ‘Cats secured singles victories from No. 1 Andrea Zamurri, No. 2 Fabien Calloud and No. 5 Martin Sanchez. Zamurri and Sanchez each posted three-set wins with identical 6-0 scores in the third set.

Bearcats triumph over Ouachita Baptist March 14

The Northwest men’s tennis team improved to 6-1 on the season with a 5-2 victory over Ouachita Baptist University March 14 at the Cooper Indoor Tennis Courts.

Northwest moved to 2-0 in



MIAA dual action with the win. Ouachita Baptist fell to 6-4 overall and 1-2 in MIAA play.

Northwest secured the doubles points for the fourth straight match and for the fifth time in seven tries this season. The Bearcats won the No. 2 and No. 3 doubles matches to take a 1-0 lead.

The Bearcats recorded wins at No. 1, No. 2, No. 4 and No. 5 singles.

Northwest’s No. 1 Andrea Zamurri and No. 2 Fabien Calloud each improved to 7-0 on the season in singles play. Northwest’s No. 5 Martin Sanchez moved to 6-1 in singles action.

The Bearcats will put their four-match win streak on the line March 19 at 10 a.m. vs. Cameron University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

Calloud named MIAA Athlete of the Week

Northwest’s Fabien Calloud has been named the MIAA men’s tennis athlete of the week for his performance in Springfield, Missouri, March 12-14.

Calloud, from Tokyo, Japan, produced a perfect 3-0 mark at No. 2 singles in helping Northwest to a 3-0 dual week that included a pair of triumphs over ranked teams in No. 20 Southwest Baptist and No. 25 Midwestern State.

Calloud scored a 6-2, 6-4 win over SBU’s Carlos Corser. He knocked off Midwestern States Ben Westwick in a 6-3, 7-5 match. Calloud finished the week with a three-set win over Ouachita Baptists Santiago Kearney, 0-6, 6-1, 6-2.

He went 2-1 in three doubles matches this past week. Calloud is 7-0 this spring at No. 2 singles.

'Cats prep for UCM rematch with long break

CORBIN SMITH Sports Reporter | @curly_corbs

After an exciting win against MIAA foe Central Missouri March 5, Northwest soccer looked to continue its success against Missouri Western March 12. Stretching across two gridlocked overtime periods, Northwest escaped St. Joseph with a 0-0 tie.

Coach Marc Gordon wasn't sure of what to expect from the Griffons (0-1-1), but he realized they did their homework on the Bearcats (1-0-1).

"I felt like they were very organized and worked very hard to set up opportunities to counter us," Gordon said. "I think this was something new our program hasn't experienced since I've been here. Typically, it's been, 'Hey, we're going to run up Northwest.' It was something different, but now we have to move forward from it."

Gordon hopes that his players take this experience and turn it into knowledge that will benefit them beyond this season. He wants his team to remember how it feels to be the better team coming into a



matchup rather than an underdog. The "back-and-forth battle," as Northwest senior midfielder Madi McKeever described it, was not the outcome the 'Cats wanted. However, it provided them with insight on how to prevent a similar result from occurring.

"We came away with a tie, which is a victory, but we wanted to win," McKeever said. "It was a little disappointing walking away with the tie, but we got a lot of players some minutes. We're still trying to find out who we are as a team, so we found some strengths and weaknesses to focus on."

With the MIAA changing the format of each member institution's season, Northwest sits in a temporary pause in action. The next scheduled match for the Bearcats is a rematch against Central Missouri April 2.

Gordon notified teams that his Bearcats are willing to play a game to fill the three-week gap in their schedule. He hopes that a team schedules a game with Northwest in the event that a game must be canceled due to COVID-19 related issues.

This season, Northwest has



ANDREW WEGLEY | NW MISSOURIAN

Freshman defender Grace Wineinger passes the ball from near the 20-yard line at Spratt Memorial Stadium in St. Joseph March 12. After 110 minutes of soccer against Missouri Western, the Bearcats tied with the Griffons 0-0.

played three games. In addition to the two aforementioned games, Northwest played an exhibition game against Minnesota State. The 'Cats lost the bout 3-0, but the loss was removed from their regular season record.

Now, Gordon must navigate how to keep his players in game-day shape without the structure of a real matchup.

"Soccer can become a chess match between coaches in how you get players ready," Gordon said. "We're starting to spend a lot of time with film and the team. It's going to be a lot of intersquad stuff.

It's hard to duplicate the intensity of playing an opponent, but it's what we have to do."

McKeever is sad for competition to stop as quickly as it began but believes that this could be beneficial for the team's chemistry. The brief pause in action will allow Northwest to break down its past three matches and attack the weaknesses it showed, something McKeever reiterated as her method of preparation.

Whether Gordon finds an earlier game, or April 2 creeps up before he can schedule one, he plans to test his players with scenarios that mirror

UP NEXT

NW vs. Central Missouri
3 p.m. April 2
Bearcat Pitch

that of a normal game. As he tries to figure out what works best for his team, the Bearcats will spend their time preparing to win again.

"I think these three weeks will be very beneficial," McKeever said. "I have to watch film and see where my mistakes were. We're going to take everything we learn from the next three weeks and hopefully be the best we can be in the next game."

Weather forces softball to move games

KESTON OLTMAN Sports Reporter | @KO_12_14

After postponements kept the Bearcats off the diamond for 12 days, the Northwest softball team will travel to St. Joseph for the Missouri Western Hy-Vee Classic March 19-20.

The Bearcats were scheduled to play Missouri Western March 13 on the road and Central Missouri March 16 in Maryville, but poor field conditions forced those games to be rescheduled.

Northwest now turns its focus to the Missouri Western Hy-Vee Classic, where the Bearcats will start their games of the Classic against Winona State University March 19.

Winona State comes into St. Joseph at 8-0 and is ranked No. 15 in the National Fastpitch Coaches Association Division II poll. The Warriors are led by a batting core that features freshman infielder Sam Keller, who is hitting for a .476 batting average and a slugging percentage of .524.

Collectively, the Warriors are hitting .329 and have a .406 on base percentage. While getting on base is no issue for Winona, hitting for power isn't something the Warriors do particularly well, with only five home runs and two triples for the season.

Winona also features a strong pitching staff led by senior Jordyn Kleman. Kleman is 5-0 on the year with an ERA of 1.50. As a team, the Warriors have an ERA of 1.75 and are holding opponents to a .211 batting average.

"Their team is put together well," Northwest softball coach Ryan Anderson said. "They're always a tough team to play. It seems like we used to play them more than we do now. They've always been a tough team."

The Bearcats (5-3) will have a quick break after the Winona game before playing the Vikings of Augustana University.

Augustana won the 2019 Division II Softball National Championship, and with COVID-19 canceling the 2020 season, the Vikings remain the defending national champions.

The Vikings are 4-2 on the season, coming in at No. 4 in the



IZIBEL DOBBS | NW MISSOURIAN

Sophomore Breck Dickey practices throwing her different pitches to her teammates during outdoor practice March 9. The Northwest softball team will be traveling to St. Joseph for the Missouri Western Hy-Vee Classic March 19-20.

NFCA poll and have not played a game since Feb. 28, a 7-5 win over the Patriots of the University of Texas at Tyler.

Augustana is led by senior outfielder Kendall Cornick, who is batting .429 with three home runs and nine RBIs in the Vikings' six games. As a team, Augustana excels at drawing walks, with 21 on the season, and hitting for power, with 10 home runs on the season and a .576 slugging percentage.

The Vikings' pitching isn't as strong, though, as Augustana has a team ERA of 3.74 while walking 22 batters in six games.

"They're a team that's transitioning into Division I," Anderson said. "Two years ago they were defending national champions, so most of those kids are back from that, and so, they're gonna be tough."

The Bearcats will start the second day of the Missouri Western Hy-Vee Classic March 20 against the Mavericks of Minnesota State.

Minnesota State comes in at 7-2 and is led by quality pitching from freshman McKayla Armbruster and junior Mackenzie Ward. Armbruster is 3-0 on the year with an ERA of 0.39, 15 strikeouts and a

mere three walks.

Ward is 4-2 on the season with a 1.27 ERA, 62 strikeouts and eight walks. The Mavericks' team ERA is 1.15 while holding opponents to a .169 batting average.

The Mavericks are good offensively as well, boasting a team batting average of .329 and an on base percentage of .402, outscoring opponents 45-13 this season.

Northwest will end its portion of the Missouri Western Hy-Vee Classic against the Upper Iowa Peacocks.

The Peacocks are 3-6 on the season and last played Feb. 28, a 14-5 loss to Drury University.

UP NEXT

Mo. West Hy-Vee Classic
March 19-20
St. Joseph, Missouri

Upper Iowa is led offensively by sophomore utility player Kaylee Frenette and junior infielder Katie Crogan. Frenette has a batting average of .448 for the season and a .515 on base percentage. She is also second on the team in RBIs with five. Crogan leads the team with eight RBIs and three home runs.

The Peacocks struggle to get on base, drawing 14 walks on the season and owning a team on base percentage of .316.

With weather conditions keeping the team off the field, the Bearcats are behind and need to use these games to work on some of the things they've struggled with to prepare for conference play, Anderson said.

"We're hoping we're not sluggish," Anderson said. "You come back, you try to work on different things, but, you know, so much of when you get into season, you just need to play. You need to play and get reps and work out the things that you need to do."

The Missouri Western Hy-Vee Classic features good competition, including three teams in the NFCA top 25 and 11 teams with winning records so far in the season.

"This MoWest tournament is usually a good tournament," Anderson said. "We pull a bunch of Minnesota teams down that have a history of playing well every year, so you hope that you can get what you need to out of those games."

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ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN

Freshmen Abby Brunssen and Kristen Ford cheer together after winning their second set of the Northwest women's 4-1 volleyball game against Washburn Feb. 24 in the Bearcat Arena. Northwest is 3-0 in the spring season and will take to the court again March 6 at 1 p.m. vs. Missouri Southern in St. Joseph.

'Cats welcome hot start to spring

CALVIN SILVERS
Sports Reporter | @CalvinSilvers

Northwest volleyball entered new territory during its 2021 campaign, having to play a reduced schedule in the spring, compared to its usual full fall season. This is due to the MIAA suspending all fall sports competitions back in August 2020 regarding COVID-19. The MIAA then finalized plans to conduct the volleyball season, which began Feb. 20. The Bearcats' starting lineup took a strike as well, losing AVCA Honorable Mention All-America pick and first-team All-MIAA senior Hallie Sidney due to injury. Bearcat volleyball coach Amy Woerth, who



begins her eighth year at the helm of the program, took advantage of the extra time away from competition to right the ship of the Northwest team. "We have three people on our team right now that weren't with us last year, and so they are freshmen and transfers," Woerth said. "Just from that standpoint, I think it helped us a ton. Having an additional semester under your belt is never a bad thing." Among the transfers is right side and outside hitter Lindsey Heller. Heller has three years of eligibility remaining after competing as a freshman at West Alabama. Heller posted 152 kills, 105 digs, 28 blocks and seven aces for the Tigers in 2019. Using the extended offseason to build chemistry has proven itself beneficial so far this season. The Bearcats

are ranked No. 17 in the AVCA Division II coaches poll and sit below Nebraska Kearney at the No. 2 spot in the MIAA North Division. Having played seven matches this far into the shortened season, Woerth has seen her team turn the tide offensively compared to last year. "We are a really good serving and passing team, and I knew we had that capability, but we have actually shown that," Woerth said. "We're one of the best passing teams in the conference so far statistically." Woerth said that building a successful volleyball team begins with having outstanding ball control and a reliant offense. Northwest keyed in on these two factors during the off-season, starting from the feet up. The Bearcats' careful practice on these

UP NEXT
NW @ Washburn
2 p.m. March 20
Topeka, Kansas

hasn't surprised Woerth in the slightest, and she knew the roster was littered with talented individuals. Northwest now turns its attention to Washburn March 20. The Bearcats took care of the Ichabods on home ground Feb. 24, winning in four sets. The backbone of the Ichabods is their ability to serve and pass efficiently. When Washburn finds its groove, they can take any opposing team out of their system.

SEE SUCCESS | A9

Dozen of Bearcats earn All-American honors in final meet of indoor season

WESLEY MILLER
Sports Reporter | @wesleymiller360

Northwest track and field ended its indoor season with multiple Bearcats recognized as All-Americans at the NCAA Indoor Track Championships March 11-13 in Birmingham, Alabama. Northwest qualified 12 athletes for the meet. Every single one of them returned to Maryville as an All-American. Among them was sophomore Blake Morgan, who finished fifth in the men's high jump with a jump of 6 feet, 10 ¼ inches. Morgan's efforts were good enough to be named a first-team All-American. "I was, overall, satisfied with my performance," Morgan said. "I know I could've done better, but the track was worn out, which caused everyone to slip. So, I was a little reserved. I am proud of what I accomplished."



IZIBEL DOBBS | NW MISSOURIAN

Sophomore Delanie Dykes earned first-team All-American honors at the NCAA Track Championships in Birmingham, Alabama, March 11-13. Dykes competed in the 800-meter run and earned a time of 2:13.74.

UP NEXT
ESU Relays (Outdoor)
March 26-27
Emporia, Kansas

SEE NATIONALS | A9

Northwest nabs initial sweep of year against MIAA rival

THOMAS TURNER
Missourian Reporter | @NWMSports

Northwest baseball completed its first three-game sweep of the season against Rogers State March 12-13. Pitching and defense led the Bearcats to the three consecutive wins. After falling behind 2-0 early, junior pitcher Max Spitzmiller and the Bearcats settled down and defeated the Hillcats 5-2. Spitzmiller finished the game with seven innings pitched, two earned runs and three strikeouts. "He was a little frustrated early with some of their hits and where they were, but it was just bad luck," Northwest coach Darin Loe said. "He really settled in then and had a great game after that." The Bearcats had their way at the plate, combining for eight hits. They broke away in the eighth inning with three runs to make it a



UP NEXT
NW vs. Pitt State
March 20-21
Bearcat Baseball Field

5-2 game. Sophomore third baseman Brett Holden had two hits and an RBI, while sophomore center fielder Drew Mackie added to the action with an RBI and two walks. "Coming off a week where we weren't great at the plate, we wanted to get better in a lot of spots," Loe said. "The guys looked more comfortable during this set, and we hit a lot of balls hard, which is good to see." In the second game of the doubleheader on March 12, the Bearcats won by the same score of 5-2, but with some different help on the mound and at the plate. Junior pitcher Spencer Hanson got the win on the mound, as he went 7 2/3 innings with one earned run, four walks and four strikeouts. Hanson had somewhat of a control problem during the game, walking four Hillcats and hitting some as well. "I'd say I didn't have the best game," Hanson said. "I wasn't feeling quite normal and my tempo was off, but I had to compete with what I had. On the mound, I was more focused on not hitting guys instead of trusting my stuff. I am lucky we have a great defense and had some timing double plays."

SEE SWEEP | A9

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